

able to shut up in the grave the possibility of a resurrection by Jesus, the Divine retribution, a result of that resurrection, and, above all, their own wicked fears; and so they desecrate the great Passover Sabbath by their restless occupation, seeking to secure the grave of Him whom they had accused and condemned for His miracles of love wrought on ordinary Sabbaths. The disembodied spirit of the Jewish law must wander around the grave of Jesus upon the most sacred Sabbath of the year. In that act we have the last expression of their abandonment to the Gentiles of salvation through a Messiah; and also the strongest expression of the folly they manifested in their unbelief. By means of a priestly seal, and a borrowed military guard, they desire to secure in a permanent tomb the spirit and life of Christ,—the spirit of his past, present, and future, as if all were a mere deception.”—*Lange*.

The Chief Priests and Pharisees base their request for a seal and guard on the allegation that Jesus had said, while he was yet alive, “After three days I will rise again.” When did he say so? Never to them. True, he had repeatedly said so to his disciples, and possibly Judas might have repeated the words to the priests; but it is more probable they had in remembrance his words: “Destroy this temple; and in three days I will raise it up.” If so, they convicted themselves of falsehood; for when the words were uttered they pretended to understand them literally, whereas they now give them their legitimate application. Be that as it may, they evidently dread the possibility of a resurrection, and vainly hope, by means of the seal and the guard, to render it impossible. Behold in this another illustration of the way in which wicked men often work out, unconsciously, God’s purposes. They thought to disprove the predicted resurrection of Jesus, and lo! they secure the most triumphant evidence of its accomplishment.

Pilate grants their request: “Ye have a watch.” That is, Your request is granted; you shall have a watch. “Go your way, make it as sure as ye can.” Yes! go your way; add this as your crowning act of folly and sin. Affix your seals and station your guard. Repeat the old yet ever new history that legalism is ever the servant of the kingdom of darkness. Many a time since then has the experiment been tried, and men have sought, by the might of the secular arm, to shut the spirit and truth of Christ in a hopeless tomb; but of this we may rest assured, that the truth that has Christ in it never can be buried too deep for a resurrection, and neither Jewish seals nor Roman arms can bar *His* way to empire!

(*To be continued.*)

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RESURRECTION.—“In each of the three great periods of the Church was exhibited an instance of one taken up into heaven, body and spirit, as an encouragement to the hope of believers of attaining the same felicity,—Enoch before the law was given; Elijah under the legal economy; and Jesus Christ under the evangelical dispensation. And God, in conducting these events, has gradually disclosed life and immortality from the dawning of the morning light to the full glory of meridian splendour.”—*Hunter*.